

**WILLIAMSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
2005 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WORK SESSION #8  
Monday, April 19, 2004**

A work session of the Williamsburg Planning Commission was held on Monday, April 19, 2004, at 3:30 p.m., in Conference Room 3A, Williamsburg Municipal Building, 401 Lafayette Street.

**ATTENDANCE AND CALL TO ORDER**

Present were Commissioners Freiling, Young, Hertzler, Friend, McBeth, and Smith. Commissioner Pons was absent. Also present were Planning Director Nester and Zoning Administrator Murphy.

Mr. Freiling called the meeting to order.

**OPEN FORUM**

No one appeared to speak.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

Mr. Nester announced that the topic for today's work session was the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, and that representing the Foundation today were Robert Taylor, Senior Vice President-Finance and Administration, and Victoria Gussman, Director of Property Resource and Planning.

Mr. Taylor made the following points:

- CWF ended 2003 by reducing the budget deficit to less than \$26 million, a \$10 million improvement.
- Fund raising has been successful, with \$370 million in gifts and pledges.
- There has been a \$67 million increase in endowment value.
- CWF is investing in programs and facilities, focusing on the guest experience.
- Major changes include moving the Folk Art Museum to the Wallace Museum, forming the "Museums at Williamsburg."
- The Health Evaluation Center and the Spa/Fitness Center plans are well along, and will be an integral part of the Williamsburg Lodge reconstruction.
- Major additions are coming to Merchants Square – Talbots, Williamsburg at Home, and Blue Talon Bistro.
- The new Conference Center is planned to open the end of 2006.
- The revised ticket program is 8% ahead of last year. It will enhance revenues and reinforce the fact that Colonial Williamsburg is more than a one day experience.

Ms. Gussman made the following points:

- The Comprehensive Plan update has forced CWF to look strategically at its various properties.
- CWF is one of the largest landowners in the City, along with the College.
- The “office” designation for the approximately 30 acres north of Bypass Road is a suitable designation.
- The Visitor Center area is locked in as museum support land use.
- CWF owns about 14 acres at the end of North Henry Street in Highland Park, currently planned/zoned as low density residential. This should be developed as low to moderate density residential compatible with Highland Park, and should maintain the greenbelt along Rt. 132.
- The Center City Planning Area recommendations in the 1998 Plan still make a lot of sense – the mixed-use residential planned is beneficial to the City.
- CWF would like the flexibility to change the Spotswood Golf Course to a residential density similar to the Colonial Extension subdivision – medium density residential.
- Sub-Areas 1,2 and 3 in the CWF Planning Area on the west side of South England Street are small areas separated by ravines, and are suitable for some sort of residential or resort use. Low density residential is not the best fit – a more intensive use, such as townhouses, would be a better fit.
- Land adjacent to the Penske Vehicle Maintenance Facility which is not being developed now may be suitable for a use other than museum support that would be compatible with the area.
- Sub-Area 10 in the CWF Planning Area, north of Tutters Pond, should be looked at for the appropriate density of development. It could be possible to allow for support uses for the residential development.
- The Economic Development designation for Sub-Areas 7 and 8 in the CWF Planning Area makes sense, but the definition of Economic Development could be updated – corporate headquarters are few and far between.
- Sub-Areas 5 and 6, which are designated for Commercial land use, are ideal for commercial development.

The following issues were discussed after the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation presentations:

- The following were answers to questions from Mr. Hertzler:
  - Ms. Gussman said that approximately 14 acres beside the Penske Vehicle Maintenance Facility is available for development.
  - Ms. Gussman said that the Highland Park land would have access from Highland Park if it were developed – a proposal made some years ago was opposed by the community. Mr. Nester said that it is important to look at the appropriate density for new development.

Williamsburg Planning Commission Minutes  
Comprehensive Plan Work Session #8  
April 19, 2004

- Ms. Gussman said that CWF hasn't looked at another entrance into the Tutter's Neck area, but they recognize that Quarterpath Road needs to be improved as the area develops.
  - Mr. Taylor, answering a question on visitor demographics, said that they remain generally the same – well educated, interested in history, affluent. But there is much competition in the way of time, and trying to make it an interesting, exciting and fun vacation. All of the competition has a spa, which needs to be added to the mix to be competitive. There is a growing market also for the Health Evaluation Center concept.
- Ms. Smith said that one of the things that CW has that competitors don't is a "history" experience. Mr. Taylor said that we have a lot under one umbrella, and that it needs to be communicated better.
- Ms. Smith suggested some type of "summer camp" experience to pull families in, and said that a playground is needed in the center part of town.
- Mr. Young asked for more details on the residential areas. Ms. Gussman said that she looked at properties with Mr. Nester, and that it seemed that more appropriate densities would be advisable. She said that the Tutter's Neck area might be able to support some commercial land use.
- Ms. McBeth noted that some of the peninsulas on South England Street are similar to the size of Indian Springs, which is developed as single family.
- Ms. McBeth asked about the role of Penske. Mr. Taylor said that this summer there will be a pilot program for a shuttle between the Visitor Center and Jamestown – a cooperate venture with Williamsburg Area Transport. He said that there are questions about how the CW bus system could be integrated with WAT, and whether or not there would be state or federal funding available. He said that CWF is encouraging tour bus passenger drop-off at the Visitor Center, and then proceeding to the Penske facility. Ms. Gussman said the Penske facility will be a big boost for the maintenance of CWF buses.
- The following were answers to questions from Mr. Freiling:
  - Mr. Taylor said there are no current plans at this point for new development in the Merchants Square area, and Ms. Gussman said there is a need to look at the CWF properties strategically as far as sales go. Mr. Freiling said that the City needs to have a feel for the pace of development in the downtown area.
  - Mr. Taylor said that visitation is expected to grow modestly, with a significant increase in 2007.
  - Ms. Gussman said that the infrastructure around the Spotswood Golf Course is adequate for the suggested residential development. She said that they are looking for flexibility at this point, not a specific plan.
- Mr. Freiling noted that people living in the downtown contribute to having an "energetic" area. The Plan recognizes a benefit to having people living downtown – there are undeveloped properties, some owned by CWF, that could be developed over the next five years.
- Mr. Freiling said that the area at 199/Quarterpath Road is a viable location for commercial development, with much traffic in the area.

Williamsburg Planning Commission Minutes  
Comprehensive Plan Work Session #8  
April 19, 2004

- Mr. Hertzler noted that a lot of children live with walking distance of the downtown, which is a real challenge. A variety of things are needed to create a dynamic downtown area.
- Mr. Hertzler said that the College Bookstore was an attempt to tap into student demands, and asked if there were any more plans to tap into that? Mr. Taylor said there is not plan from the CWF standpoint. He said that Aromas is a business that addresses the need. He said that historic authenticity is the first and foremost goal. He said it is more of an individual merchant response than a CWF response.

There was a discussion of the format for the Public Forums. The Commission requested making provisions for more than three breakout groups in order to promote better discussion. It was suggested that a zoning fact sheet be available as a handout.

## **OPEN FORUM**

Darr Barshis, 17 Forest Hill Drive, said that redevelopment needs to be encouraged, since for most residents, the City is fully developed. He suggested looking at density and eliminating the floor area ratio requirement. Mr. Nester noted that the floor area ratio requirement was eliminated last year in the LB-1 District, the only district that has that restriction. Mr. Barshis talked about his property on North Boundary Street beside City Square, and said that it is grandfathered for four rental units, plus rental garage space. He said the location attracts student rentals, but doesn't meet the current density requirements, as is the case with other properties in the area. He asked what could be done to encourage change to these properties. He suggested a purchase of development rights program to encourage conversion of nonconforming properties.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Paul Freiling, Chairman  
Williamsburg Planning Commission